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RECONSTRUCTION OF THE ORIGINAL CHANSON DE ROLAND - Luquie
(Review by J. S. Will. 1910)

THE CHURCH AND STATE IN FRANCE - J. S. Will. 1917

EDGAR QUINET. A FORGOTTEN PROPHET - J. S. Will. 1917-191

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The Reconstruction of the Original Chanson de Roland. By FREDERICK BLISS LUQUIENS. Reprinted from the Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, Vol. XV, July, 1909.

This paper is announced as the introduction to a series the purpose of which is the reconstruction of the original *Roland*. The author hopes by methods of literary criticism to be able to fashion a text which will be open to fewer objections than those we already possess. "Although the *Chanson de Roland* has been studied for three-quarters of a century, many of its problems, including several of the most important ones, are as yet unsolved. In the opinion of the present writer, however, a great number of these problems are solvable if the following thesis be proved—that the original *Chanson de Roland* was a poem of marked and consistent technical excellence."

To prove the "marked and consistent technical excellence" of the original poem, Mr. Luquiens deems it sufficient to establish the merits of a more or less distant relative. "That x (the original) was a poem of marked and consistent technical excellence is practically proved by the following two facts: (1) one of the extant manuscripts, O (the Oxford MS.), is of marked and almost consistent technical excellence; (2) the few technical faults of O may be plausibly attributed to copyists." "These facts, however, need detailed exemplification, for very few investigators have realized them." There are not many students of this epic who will hesitate to concur in the author's general estimate of the literary worth of the Oxford MS., but it is more than questionable that they will approve his logic. "I hope," he continues, "that the foregoing exposition has rendered clear the nature of the Oxford manuscript's technic. If so, I may consider my thesis—that the original *Chanson de Roland* was a poem of marked and consistent technical excellence as proved." The conclusion of this argument seems hardly warranted by the premises. These "facts" may be proved and "the nature of the Oxford manuscript's technic rendered clear," but how does that establish the greater perfection of the original? "Est-on tenu de se représenter à l'origine un âge d'or où auraient fleuri des poèmes merveilleusement logiques et harmonieux, contre lesquels par la suite des remanieurs stupides se seraient acharnés?" asks M. Bédier (*Légendes Épiques*, I, 305). Bédier, Gaston Paris and others answer in the negative. Mr. Luquiens replies in the affirmative. "Almost all students of the question have thought that between x (the original) and x' (the progenitor of all redactions) intervened a long process of accretion. To quote Professor Weeks: "To my mind, the process of development was so gradual that, at no stage of the operation could one say: 'Here begins the Oxford version.'" No editor who holds this opinion would attempt to reconstruct x. But, if my thesis be conceded, it must also be conceded that between x and x', and between x' and O, there was very little accretion, or indeed change of any kind; that, moreover, it is feasible to reconstruct x, merely by excluding from O whatever is due to its scribe, or to the scribe of x'." This is a specious argument but one is tempted to inquire why he should "concede" the "thesis" when that thesis is the very subject that is most disputable and requires most careful proof. This thesis is the very heart of Mr. Luquiens' case and is exactly what cannot be conceded in the case of the *Roland* any more than in the case of any other *chanson de geste*. To ensure acceptance of his 'thesis' Mr. Luquiens must prove that the process of reworking was a process of pejoration.

"The argument might be made much simpler for any who would accept subjective reasoning." Unfortunately, the question is one of external evidence. Subjective treatment in the realm of *Roland*-study, found its apotheosis in the work of Bourdillon. Mr. Luquiens' difficulties with the text and with his familiar 'the copyist,' recall inevitably the labors of that all but forgotten editor.

'Voici la marche,' says Bourdillon, 'que j'ai suivie dans mon travail. J'ai commencé d'abord par apprendre à peu près par cœur le texte de mes manuscrits. Cela obtenu, une fois bien ferme sur ce terrain, j'ai pris l'ordre des idées et j'ai appelé les vers, qui alors, sans peine, sans effort, et d'eux-mêmes, sont venus se ranger sous ma plume et c'est ainsi que notre poème, si l'on peut l'assimiler à une statue, s'est trouvé, non pas sorti du bloc de marbre, mais dégagé des haillons dont la main des hommes pendant plusieurs siècles l'avait affublé. Ce travail s'est achevé de telle façon, qu'en vérité je ne crois pas avoir omis dix vers

appartenant à l'auteur. Quand je voulais m'écarter un peu à droit ou à gauche, je trouvais ses vers pitoyables, clochant par le sens, par la mesure et par la rime, comme s'ils fussent sortis d'une tête battant la campagne, ou bien d'une incohérence d'idées, attestant qu'ils n'ont pu être conçus que par des gens sans littérature ni éducation" (quoted by Foerster, Altfranz. Bibliothek, Bd. 6, p. ix).

What an invaluable document in the history of humor and subjective criticism! For Bourdillon the original *Chanson de Roland* sprang perfect at all points from the head of Calliope. It is worthy of note, however, that Mr. Luquiens' favorite codex O was the worst of redactions in the eyes of Bourdillon.

Passing over the cursoriness of the author's 'detailed exemplification' of the excellence of the Oxford MS., his examination fails in convincing force. We fail to see that Marsile, when he cries "Jo nen ai ost qui bataille li dunne" (l. 18), is playing upon words. This line stands in unreconcilable conflict with ll. 564-5 which show that Marsile is quite confident of his ability to meet Charles with an army "plus bele ne verreiz, Quatre cenz milie chevaliers." Surely there is a lack of seriousness, also, in citing the simple inconsistency between 'desuz un pin' and 'desuz dous arbres' as the only breach in the unity of the *Roland*. While this is a fault, it does not disturb the action of the poem at all in the measure that it is disturbed by the difficulty mentioned above or by the poetic inconsequences of the introduction of hostages given by Marsile to Charles. "Because the wily counsellor may have thought his despondent sovereign to be in need of some violent excitant," will scarcely be regarded as a successful suggestion to account for Blancandrin's failure to warn Marsile of Ganelon's real intentions. One may be pardoned also if he confess that Mr. Luquiens' argument for O's presentation of the quarrel scene between Roland and Ganelon has failed to convince him that it is not logically impossible and dramatically inferior to the arrangement of the editors. The need for the reconstruction of such portions as are represented by Stengel's *laissez* cxia, cxib, cxic and for Müller's re-arrangement of ll. 1628-1670 seems as imperative as ever to one who is not interested in defending O at all hazards.

Allusion might be made to other details of Mr. Luquiens' criticism. Sufficient has been said, however, to indicate the line of his argument.

The second part of this paper is occupied with a discussion of Stengel's edition, in an effort to show that a text such as Müller's constituted upon the 'Oxford-stemma' alone is superior to a text—Stengel's—constituted from all the redactions. "Müller's text is practically the Oxford manuscript. Therefore it possesses, of course, marked and almost consistent technical excellence. Let us turn to the examination of Stengel's text." The "poetaster" whom Stengel has been unfortunate enough to summon to the footlights is a very reprehensible person. Stengel's edition "is at the same time the most useful and the most harmful of books dealing with the *Roland* . . . it is harmful because . . . it is now generally accepted as the authoritative text of the *Roland*." "The fact that Stengel's supposed x' contains over six hundred lines more than O, arouses at the outset suspicions of lack of technic." It may be more difficult to appreciate the value of such a distinction between Stengel and Müller when it is seen exactly how Müller regarded those fatally redundant six hundred lines. A consultation of Müller's foot-notes will reveal the fact that he regards about one-half of these lines as undoubtedly original. Another one hundred are 'unessential,' 'possible,' 'doubtful.' We may conclude from his silence in regard to the remaining two hundred that he

thought them superfluous. Mr. Luquiens appears to misapprehend Müller in more cases than this. "No one," says Mr. Luquiens, "has ever attempted the reconstruction of x (the original poem)." "He (Müller) did not consider the reconstruction of the original poem to be feasible." Müller says: "Ich habe das Original zu reconstruiren gesucht" (La Chanson de Roland, 2^{te} Aufl., 1878, p. vi). Again Mr. Luquiens says: "So his (Müller's) formula—to adopt his expression—may be reduced to lowest terms as follows: *Never alter the Oxford manuscript to accord with the other redactions except for an imperative reason.*" Then, having enlarged upon Müller's "infidelity to his formula," he continues: "In short, to Müller's formula should be added: exclude from the Oxford manuscript whatever may be proved due to copyists." Now compare Müller: "Es finden sich andererseits im Oxforder Texte mehrere ungehörige Einschießel, die dem Uebersetzer zugeschrieben werden müssen. Sie sind durch Einklammerung Kenntlich gemacht" (Müller, op. cit., p. vii). Perhaps an injustice is done to Mr. Luquiens, but Müller seems to have anticipated his suggestions.

There is no such difference, then, between Stengel and Müller as the writer of this paper seems to imply. Stengel's redaction is not final. Prof. Stengel himself does not seem to have thought of it as being so. Nevertheless it remains to many the truest representation that we possess of the original. Hence its basic value. Müller's text was superseded because it failed to carry out its purpose. "Es ist nun das in der Oxforder Handschrift Fehlende nach den anderen Redactionen ergänzt. . . Einzelne Verse, welche vermisst worden, habe ich in der Sprache des Originals in den Text eingerückt; ganze Tiraden dagegen habe ich nicht in der ursprünglichen Gestalt wiederzugeben gesucht. . . Ich habe mich damit begnügt, die entsprechenden Tiraden aus den anderen Redactionen unter dem Texte mitzutheilen" (Müller, op. cit., p. vii). Müller shrank from thorough-going reconstruction. Stengel attacked his task boldly and his achievement is greater than Müller's because, with all the faults of his text, he has given us a poem undoubtedly much closer to the original than that of Müller. Should we go even so far as to deny high technical excellence to this reconstruction, it would constitute no argument against close approximation to the original.

Had Mr. Luquiens been able to prove that Müller's text possessed all the merits which he claims for it and that Stengel's was as vicious as he asserts, it would scarcely have corrected the fallacies of his reasoning. That he has done even this remains open to doubt.

The task of the reconstruction of the Roland is one which, by reason of its inherent difficulties as well as because of the great names connected with it, might seem calculated to give pause to the most adventurous. Mr. Luquiens appears to be carried away with the idea that he has discovered an easy method. His key is the literary perfection of the Oxford manuscript, from which the unwarranted deduction of the perfection of the original poem. The key, however, is not fitting the wards. Perhaps Mr. Luquiens' main proposition is correct. It may be that the construction of the original *Chanson de Roland* will be rendered easier by the results of literary criticism. But he has approached the problem with a dangerous and, we think, an unsubstantiated preconception. It will be interesting to follow his speculations in the articles that are to follow.

THE CHURCH AND STATE IN FRANCE.

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Not so very long ago it would have been impossible to discuss this question openly and without prejudice. Our minds were poisoned against the French Republic. Our traditional detestation of the French Revolution, the legacy of our own wars with France at that time, combined with our ignorance of the real significance of the problems at stake in the political life of that country during the course of the 19th century, as well as with our impatience at being disturbed in our smugness by the intrusion of new ideas, led us to view with intolerance any fresh upheaval in, as it seemed to us, an unnecessarily disquieted country.

Because we did not understand that country we condemned it. From every quarter anathemas were directed against it. Said the Archbishop of Westminster, as if separation and dechristianization were one and the same thing: "The pretext of independence but ill conceals hatred of the Church, and with it, hatred of Christianity. The great French nation can never find its true development unless it provides for the life and prosperity of a church that represents historic Christianity in the country." In Huron County, Ontario, at the same time, an attempt was made to boycott articles of French manufacture. These instances represent fairly well the general uninformed attitude toward France at the time that the separation of Church and State was in process of consummation.

It is possible now, however, to approach the question dispassionately. In France itself, even before the outbreak of the war, the bitterness of fifteen years ago between clericals and anti-clericals had died away, and our minds were free from the echo of that discord. But the chief change is in ourselves. The development of our altered attitude toward the "Queen of Nations" would make an interesting study in national psychology. Do we know France better? Certainly we love her more. Her name is just now one to conjure with. For this change the affiliations of diplomacy and war are largely responsible. The Entente Cordiale closed a century of misunderstandings. It was established when the separation struggle was most bitter, and was due to political exigency, not to mutual

love between the two peoples. It was welcomed in the British Empire not because we knew that an alliance with France was our glorious destiny, but because it was fostered and concluded by a great representative Englishman, of whom we were very proud, and who, more than any other statesman and more than most men of his time, understood the French race and was understood by it. Not the popular voice, but the instinct of Edward VII., guided a none too eager people to its true racial and spiritual affinity on the Continent of Europe.

This bond has been made indissoluble by the war. The patience of France, her unanimity and high courage, her sufferings and endurance, have captivated our minds and changed our mood. Accustomed to regard France as the symbol of lightness and frivolity, as incapable of self-control or self-direction, we have grown ashamed of these thoughts as we watched her imperturbable calm and unmoved determination in the most titanic attack a nation has ever experienced upon her physical and moral resources. We have seen a vision, and France has become real to us. We see her as Joan of Arc, quieting the tumult in her own bosom, divesting herself of the garments of her feminine delicacy, and clothing herself in the armor of light and immortality. In the presence of that vision, all our petty thoughts and suspicions die away.

There are many persons who account for this vision by supposing a new France. The France of to-day, calm, strong, victorious, is not, they say, the France of yesterday. This is a poor and shallow self-deception. Shall a nation change its soul overnight? The Prussia of to-day is the Prussia of yesterday. The France of 1914 and 1917 is the France of yesterday. It is the France of 1870. The difference is that the France of 1914 was in better hands than the France of 1870. Her government in 1914 was in finer moral order, was more capable and less corrupt than her government of forty-seven years ago. We like to say "A New France," "France Herself Again," "France has found her Soul." Let us not pay ourselves with words and invent new phrases as a cloak for our misunderstanding. What we mean is, our eyes have been opened. We have ourselves seen a new vision, the more blinding to us in that our sight was so dark. We have made a discovery. The discovery is that France really, all the while, had a soul.

It is true that there has been some excuse outside of ourselves

for our shallow judgment. For more than a generation France has seen much dispeace at home. Strident voices have been heard. Unseemly quarrels have taken place. Unwise acts have been done. Shameful words have been spoken. Vulgarities have been evident. But these sounds—not, after all, peculiar to France—had died away. The crisis had passed. When the great call came, France knew herself for what she had always been, a great nation, united and unafraid. In spite of its tendency to wrangle, democratic France found itself capable of the great task it had set out to perform. Crutches and apologies might be thrown away. France was whole at heart.

That is the great fact. After more than one hundred years of struggle, disheartening and sickening, French democracy has triumphed. The war has proved it. Finally, inexorably, the Marne and Verdun have sealed the doom of any factional spirit hostile to a democratic France. The travail of a century is completing itself. France is being justified.

This struggle against mediaevalism has been world-wide. Circumstances of a political and temperamental kind have made the fight more pronounced and bitter in France than elsewhere. There the old and the new fought uninterruptedly during the century that has just finished. Between 1814 and 1914 the one great political question was the fate of the principles of democracy. That is the central fact about which the whole national life revolved during that pregnant period. The problem was not how shall democracy rule itself, but, is democracy to be allowed to rule itself? One revolution in 1830, another in 1848, and a war with Prussia in 1870, were all necessary to show the royalists that they, with their eyes fixed on the past, with their creeds and shibboleths and mummeries, were quite unequal to the task of constituting a government for a great forward-looking nation.

Even then they had no mind to learn their lesson. The Republican constitution of 1875 was carried by a majority of one. That majority was sufficient, but on the surface it was not convincing. It seemed to leave the question still open for discussion and solution. The significance of that majority of one is easily misunderstood, however. It was a very considerable defeat for the monarchists. The fact is that the National Assembly was a royalist body. Yet it voted for Republican institutions. But the royalists did not accept

their defeat. For thirty years they carried on an insidious warfare against popular government, using every device and taking advantage of every circumstance to embarrass the Republic. They died hard. Before they died they had all but wrecked their country.

The most united, the most consistent and the most influential supporters of the royalist cause were the clergy. It can be readily understood that they were bitterly hostile to the democratic idea. In the struggle that developed between Republicans and Monarchists after 1871, the Church promptly allied itself with the latter. "The Monarchists were the most inept political party that ever wrecked a powerful cause." The Church shared in the disasters that, one after another, involved that party in ruin during the next twenty years. The first blow was the defeat of Macmahon in 1877. The next was the Boulangist fiasco in 1888-9—where the clergy were again on the losing side. Then the *cause célèbre* of the decade, beginning in 1894—the Dreyfus case—alienated great masses of moderate opinion from the Catholic and Conservative party, and threw them into the ever-swelling ranks of the radicals and anti-clericals. In this amazing affair, which impassioned the entire nation, and in which the individual wronged was lost sight of in a titanic struggle on behalf of toleration, freedom and the essential principles of justice, the Clergy were again with the losers.

Thus, in the last quarter of the century, the clericals had manœuvred the Church out of a position of great prestige. In 1875 the Catholics had every card in their hands. "They were in power. They had money and influence; they had the officials, the judges, the army, a great majority in Parliament, the Ministers and the Chief of the State." The anti-clericals were an insignificant minority. When it became plain that the clergy had united with the royalists for the restoration of the monarchy, the anti-clericals declared war. The attack was opened by a demand for educational reforms. Elementary education, then under the direction of the Church, was taken out of its hands. It was made free and compulsory. The schools were secularized. The State, as well, resumed control of University degrees. Finally, all religious orders not definitely authorized by law were expelled from the country.

This anti-clerical spirit, although nourished by the Boulanger movement, died to a very large extent when the wise Leo XIII.

called upon French Catholics to line themselves up with the Republic and give it their full support, since all authority was from God. Had this prudent advice been followed, it is in the highest degree probable that the question of separation would not have arisen to this day. The spirit of hostility to the clergy grew again very rapidly, however, when it was seen that the educational laws were being flagrantly violated, when the clerical attacks upon the State schools grew in violence, and the persecution of school-teachers grew more open. It was fanned into a flame by the Dreyfus case.

The Dreyfus trial laid bare the fact that the majority of the clergy had refused to follow Leo's advice concerning adhesion to the Republic. Their uncompromising hostility caused real political disorder. I do not wish to enter into the details of this passionate, sordid and tragic story. The documents in the case have been more than once printed. Elections were manipulated, officials were corrupted with the money of the faithful, civil war was threatened, the overthrow of the Republic was again and again advocated. The picture of a religious crusade in the twentieth century is scarcely imaginable, but passion begets passion and patriots might be pardoned for resenting a call for the repetition of the horrors of St. Bartholomew's day. Let us think that such appeals would not have received episcopal approbation at a calmer moment. Not all of the clergy were involved in these attacks. It was the religious orders that were especially imprudent in their words and deeds.

The immediate effect of this attitude of the clergy was to unite against them all the parties that on other grounds would have been irreconcilables. Radicals, democrats, socialists, moderate Republicans, all with one voice demanded the disciplining of the refractory clergy. The government called upon all religious orders to obtain authorization or disperse. Some left the country without more ado—the Jesuits and the Benedictines. Then in an unjustifiable and intolerant way, the rest were expelled almost *en masse*.

It was the clergy who had forced the issue. Frenchmen saw themselves confronted by two conceptions of government: the clerical or Roman and the secular. To their minds the latter was the Christian conception, because it recognized that there were certain things that should be rendered to Caesar, and others that should be rendered to God. The moment had come when a decision must be made between these two ideals. The nation had found that

whenever it wished to take a step toward social and political equality the clergy stood across its path. The clergy had found it impossible to keep away from purely political affairs, and, as the Bishop of Rouen said, the intervention of the clergy in political matters had always been fatal to the Church.

Separation seemed the only solution. The old working agreement, the Concordat of 1801, had had its day. A new arrangement was necessary. In the long association of Church and State in France, separation had seemed imminent more than once. It had been contemplated by Philip the Fair as a solution of his difficulties with Boniface VIII. It had actually taken place in 1794. Lamennais had seen in it the only hope for the Church. Lamartine had urged it. It was discussed in 1880. Now men hesitated before the fact. Waldeck-Rousseau was opposed to it. Even Combes refused his consent to its presentation to the Chamber while he was leader of the government. After he had resigned, he proposed it himself.

Finally, separation was rendered inevitable by the action of the Vatican itself. In 1903, the Papal Secretary informed the French ambassador that the Pope was not favorable to the proposed visit of the President of the Republic to the King of Italy. "His Holiness would regard it as an insult as well to the rights of the Holy See as to his august person, and in consequence declines all responsibility for the serious consequences that an event of this kind would have for French influence in foreign lands." This veiled threat against the sovereignty of the French nation could not pass unnoticed. More Catholic kings of France than Henry IV. had bridled at such an attack. President Loubet paid his visit, which was one of pure courtesy, to the King of Italy. The Pope wounded the *amour propre* of the French people by calling upon the governments of Europe to resent the action of the French President. Nothing could save the situation. Diplomatic relations were severed. The Law of Separation was proposed in February, 1905, and was passed in December following. It became effective without disturbances.

The Bill was constructed with great deliberation and after careful investigation of ecclesiastical interests. It became law only after prolonged examination before the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. Every opportunity was given for criticism. No essential interest was neglected. The purpose of the Commission was to

safeguard religion while making it impossible for organized ecclesiasticism to embarrass the State. The State was to be secularized. All religious bodies were put on the same footing. Under the name of "Cultural Associations" (or "Associations for Public Worship") All religions—Catholic, Protestant, Hebrew, etc.—were given the same standing. Congregations were to be formed by the voluntary motion of persons so inclined. On application to the authorities, these societies received formal recognition as civil bodies. Eventually, such congregations were to be self-supporting, deriving no assistance from the State. In the meantime, pensions (totalling about 25,000,000 francs) were provided for the clergy, toward whom the State had no thought of denying its obligations as under the Concordat. Existing Church buildings became the property of these associations on comparatively trifling conditions. The State is not to be blamed if, profiting by experience, it made impossible the heaping up by wealthy congregations of great reserves which might be used again for other than religious or beneficent ends.

The majority of French Catholics accepted the law quietly. Some of the Bishops set to work to reorganize their dioceses in conformity with the proposed provisions of the Bill, even before the Bill had been placed on the Statute books. They saw that every protection was being furnished for the dignity, the discipline and the material interests of the Church. The bishops met in convention and agreed to comply with the law, while endorsing its *theoretical* condemnation by the Pope. A few disturbances occurred, created by "pious hooligans," but the Administration remained calm and tolerant. The time limit for the formation of associations was extended again and again, and every facility was provided for the making of the adjustments necessary to such a crisis.

Prophecies of evil have not been made true. Schism has not broken out in the Church. To prevent this the law provided that property would be assigned only to those associations that remained in communion with the original church. The State renounced its ancient right of the appointment and even of the nomination of bishops. There remains no impediment to the Pope's authority over the clergy. Membership has not declined. Secularization has not meant a declaration of atheism. The prestige of the episcopate as a civil authority has diminished, but its moral influence will benefit thereby. Gallicanism, the distinguishing feature of the

Church of France, the cause of many quarrels with Rome and heart-burnings on the part of the Pope, exists no more. Ultramontaniam has triumphed in the Church—Will this mean a slow death because of the crushing out of the spirit of liberalism?

In so far as one is able to judge, the results of this law have been beneficial to the Church. The intransigent element, following the lead of the Curia, has succeeded in depriving the Church of some of the advantages of the law, but these will correct themselves in time. The Church has not suffered in her active representatives. The self-devotion of the priest has won increasing respect. The austere simplicity of his life and his cheerful perseverance strike the heroic note and disarm criticism. To his side he has attracted many of his harshest critics. The newspapers have dropped their attacks. As he organizes his work among the young men, among laborers, among the women of his cure, he is gaining the respect and confidence of those with whom he engages in closer and closer rivalry. Here, too, the war plays its happy as well as its fateful part. The priest, the pastor and the rabbi are seeing the deeper mysteries of love and forbearance as they strive together in the same great heroism of sacrifice and devotion. These are the best pledges for the future of the religious life of France.

EDGAR QUINET

A FORGOTTEN PROPHET.

I.

EDGAR Quinet—historian, philosopher, and poet—deserves to be remembered as the one man in Europe prior to 1871 who knew Germany for what she was and denounced her to the world. After the Franco-Prussian war and the cruel exactions of the Treaty of Frankfort, other men, like Professor Beesley of University College, London, condemned Germany for her brutal realism and sought to arouse public opinion against her, charging her with the very crimes against private and public law for which at this hour she stands in universal reprobation. But to Quinet belongs the distinction of having discerned, forty years before that war, the fatal drift of Prussian politics and philosophy and of having warned the Carlyles and the Cousins and the Michelets, the hierophants of German idealism, that their gods were dead. He began his warnings in 1831. He continued them, through evil report and good report, while professor at Lyons (1839) and at the *Collège de France* (1842) and while in exile (1852-1871), to the very eve of the war of 1870.

Quinet knew Germany and loved it. Fitted by temperament to understand its spirit, he lived in Germany, studied in Germany, understood its language perfectly, and was passionately fond of its literature. Like all the Frenchmen of his time he had been brought by Madame de Staël under the spell of the great living and dead idealists: Herder, Kant, Goethe, Schiller. Herder was his first love. The reading of the "*Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*" provoked in him unbounded enthusiasm and fixed the direction of his life. Germany became his ideal, his romance. His life-long friendship with Cousin and Michelet was begun in a common passion for the ideals that were revealed to them through Herder. "This book has been for me an inexhaustible spring of consolation and of joy. I have never put it down without a more exalted idea of the mission of man upon earth, without a more profound belief in the reign of justice and reason, without feeling myself more devoted to my country and to the cause of freedom, and altogether more capable of right action." He set to work at once on the translation of Herder. Cousin, watching his passionate

absorption, said to him: "My boy, you have seen your star. You must attain it or ruin yourself in the attempt."

In pursuit of his star Quinet went to Germany in 1826 when he was twenty-three years of age. He tells us himself of his sensations as he reached the land of his captivation. "Under every tree and every bush of the Black Forest I expected to find a complete poem. How many endless hours did I spend beside numberless springs waiting for the appearance of some shape that should be like Undine of the Fisherman's Tale. I never heard a young girl's voice under the flowering almonds of the Neckar but I recognised Margaret, Clara, Mignon, and, above all, with her cheeks so pale, Leonora of Bürger's ballad. These poetic images were real to me. I thought I should find them in countless numbers in every village of the Odenwald and I never knocked at a door of the Burgstrasse without thinking that here was one of those ivory gates from which, at the poet's behest, issued the dreams that filled the world."

From Strasbourg to Heidelberg the "translator of Herder" wandered in perpetual enchantment. Through every sense he drank in the romance and mystery and beauty of these German lands. He became engaged to the daughter of a notary of Grünstadt, whom he married in 1834. He met Niebuhr and Schlegel and Tieck and Kreutzer and talked with them of Goethe and Kant and Schiller. Such were the magic spectacles through which Quinet looked upon Germany between 1826 and 1831. His attachment to it was strengthened by the chagrin he felt over the bankruptcy of liberty in his own country.

The Germany of Quinet was also the Germany of his countrymen—largely the creation of their romantic minds. In their illusions, Romanticism made its great abortion. It was the Germany of the past.

Within a year Quinet saw that Germany was undergoing a change; he hoped that from the process would emerge, not merely a newer, but even a finer spirit. In 1827 he wrote: "Germany is applying herself to the experimental sciences, of which she stands in great need. Practically her whole genius is being absorbed by them. But it will not last forever, and when she returns to speculation we shall see what can be produced among the German races by the harmonising of the ideal and the real." Contrary to his expectations, this new passion of Germany's was also a lasting one, and in its light attendant elements of German mentality and character became clearer to him. By 1831 his disillusionment was

complete. A new and terrifying truth had burned itself into his mind. The blindness of Frenchmen and their infatuation for an obsolete German philosophy seemed to him full of menace for the future of civilisation. Conflict between the two countries seemed certain. He decided to sound the alarm. His countrymen must be aroused. Germany, the nation of idealists, had become a nation of realists. Only one thought filled their minds: the greatness of Germany! This was plain in 1831. "Was it announced in the Courts and Chancelleries or in the press? Assuredly not. But lacking political documents signs were not wanting at the heart of things. It was like a low murmur coming from no man knew where. It had neither form nor substance. It appeared here and there in conversations, in broken utterances, in sudden enthusiasms that flared up and disappeared like a flash of light." The old ideas that had been implanted in France by Madame de Staël needed correction. This is what Quinet undertook to accomplish in the articles that he published during the next ten years (1831-1842): "Germany and the Revolution," "Art in Germany," "Heinrich Heine," "Teutomania," "1815-1840." It is with these pamphlets—by-products, as it were, of his mental life—that I am concerned, not with his more formal works on history or literature or religion. And my interest in these is neither in their poetry, nor in their passionate patriotism, nor in their failure to influence the minds of his countrymen, but solely in that remarkable insight into the meaning of history and understanding of the German mind that gives to his purely logical deductions the uncanny suggestion of divination.

J. S. WILL.

(To be concluded).

EDGAR QUINET

A FORGOTTEN PROPHET.

II.

THE decade, 1830-1840, during which Quinet constituted himself the French Cassandra, who, presumably wiser men, touching their foreheads in pitying significance, passed heedlessly by, is generally interpreted by the apologists of German history as a period of waiting and doubt. The forces of liberalism, having spent themselves in the violence of the Napoleonic wars and the early Restoration period, were drawing breath before they burst out again in the lightnings and thunders of social revenge and regeneration. It is the calm before the storm. The storm burst in 1848—a poor summer shower for thirsty Germany. To Quinet, on the other hand, as indeed to a few Germans such as Lenau, it was a period of pessimism and gloom, but not of hushed expectancy. "A profound transformation is working among the German peoples," but to Quinet the direction of the change was not doubtful. It was not primarily the liberties of Germany that were at stake, but the liberties of Europe. The German peoples were in travail, to be sure, but the issue of their labour was that portentous abortion the Prussian State, involving the death of all generous national aspirations.

Quinet deserves a much more careful study than I am able to give him here with the limited means at my disposal(*) but it is curious and interesting, in the present general ransacking of life and history for traces of the poison that has infected our generation, to follow even cursorily the keen intuitions of this philosopher whose name is known to no foreigners and to few Frenchmen, except as that of one of the great boulevards of Paris.

To Quinet, in 1831, as he returned to Heidelberg after a vacation in France, a new Germany appears. Teutonic cosmopolitanism is a thing of the past. "Its old genius is dissolving; a new spirit knocks at its gates like a battering-ram." Lessing's declaration: "I have no conception of love of fatherland; it seems to me at best a

* The works of Quinet are not accessible. I have had no material for this study except notes made long ago and a text-book for college use, admirable for its purpose, published by the Oxford University Press.

heroic weakness which I can very well do without," had been swept away into the limbo of the past by Stein's stentorian cry, "I have but one fatherland, Germany!" So the men of dreams had been succeeded by the men of action. The former had lifted German thought out of its subservience to France and had furnished it with a background of ideas and feelings that were purely Teutonic and had evoked in the people a race consciousness completely independent and vigorous. The latter had given substance to the dreams of poets and philosophers, and had imparted to their race an avid desire for action. Napoleon's tyranny, too, had created a thirst for revenge and his administrative genius had provided the instrument of its accomplishment. "The bond that poetry and philosophy had prepared in men's souls he cemented in his own way by blood and action on the great day of history (Waterloo)." Leipzig had obliterated the torturing memories of Jena and revealed to the world how well Germany had learned from its taskmaster. France's abdication, after Waterloo, of the leadership of Europe completed the spiritual unification of Germany, filled her with ambition and opened her eyes to opportunity.

But one step more was needed. That step—commercial unity—was being taken before Quinet's very eyes. In 1828 Prussia had concluded a treaty with Hesse-Darmstadt. In the same year commercial union was established among the central states. Bavaria and Wurtemberg joined Prussia in 1833 and a year later came the Zollverein.

The striving of the spirit of national unity is felt in every form of intellectual activity. The vague horizons in which German art had hitherto wandered, are limited now by the Rhine and the Danube. Music is no longer the general and dispersed harmony of the North and South, the multiplied and nameless echoes of the human race. It is a native music whose errant rhapsodies one hears at night at city gates, sighs that steal from the ruined walls and lichens of the castles of the Rhine. And poetry too bids adieu to its thatch, its dreams, its summer nights, and, as its epithalamium, sings *The Song of the Sword*. "Such is the unity of the Germanic world that everything serves to reveal, kings, peoples, religion, liberty, despotism." Such is the travail of the race—towards unity.

"Here," says Quinet, "I am tempted to put down my pen. Sadness overwhelms me. The country of faith and love has become the country of doubt and wrath." The bankruptcy of idealism has

"gagged and strangled in all other respects, were absolutely free to say, invent, or imagine anything whatever in regard to France."

Who will lead the new Germany? Austria is the hereditary candidate for this honour, but she is no longer to be feared. A new power has seized the German sword, whose "despotism is more menacing than that of Austria, for it is not only in the government; it is in the race, in its manners and in the *parvenu* tone of the national mind." Prussia sums up in itself the aggressive elements of the new Germany. "It is in Prussia that the old impartiality and political cosmopolitanism has given way to an irritable and passionate national spirit. It is in Prussia that the popular party first made peace with the central power and it is Prussia, intelligent, restless, enterprising, that is giving to Germany to-day that for which it is most greedy: action, real life, social initiative, and is more than satisfying her suddenly acquired taste for might and material power."

In 1831 when he wrote these words, Quinet also wrote his answer to the present shallow sophistries concerning a Prussia-ridden Germany that awaits only a signal or at least enlightenment to throw off her tyrant. Quinet as he watched these forces in their working declared that Germany was not being dragooned by Prussia, but gladly left her destiny in Prussian hands. Quinet is an unimpeachable witness and should be listened to. "Germany was grateful to Prussia for showing that under this cloud of shadowy idealism in which she had always been pictured, she could forge if need be as well as others, arms and trophies of bronze." Prussia appears then to Quinet as the genius of the German people translating into action their imponderable and incorporeal ideals and "Germany places itself under the dictation of a people not more enlightened than she, but more avid, more ardent, more exacting, and better equipped for affairs. Into the hands of that people she commits her ambitions, her rancours, her rapine, her trickeries, her diplomacy, her violence, her glory, and the regulation of her internal liberties." And Prussia was specially qualified to receive into its hands the destinies of a blond Germany avid of greatness, for the first enemy to be crushed is France, and Prussia, as a result of the acquisition of the Rhineland by the treaty of 1815, "holds in its hand the humiliation of France and the avenging of the long affront of the Treaty of Westphalia, for the Treaty of Westphalia and the cession of Alsace and Lorraine bleed still at the heart of Germany, as the treaty of 1815 at the heart of France.

If she were free to do so, Germany would push Prussia on slowly and from behind to the assassination of the ancient realm of France."

Thus Prussia steps into the leadership of Germany, becomes the living majesty of her cynical philosophy and gives to her civilisation its necessary development—Prussia, that "at Waterloo broke the wing of France's fortune" and "has since carried at her waist the keys of French territory."

In admirable articles in 1838, 1840, and 1841, Quinet sought to show the essential unity and continuity of national genius in the modern world and the contributions that each makes to the life of humanity. It was a lofty appeal to Germany and to France to lay aside their mutual rancours and live side by side in peace with each other lest the mad envies and competitions of races drown the world in horror. He argued that the ambitions of France were not incompatible with the greatness and dignity of Germany. The sun was generous enough to give light and warmth to both. There was no need to clamour for space. But Sadowa, twenty-five years later, brought him back sharply to his argument of 1831 and to a discussion of the inevitableness of Germany's future.

Commercial unity had been reached in Germany by the Zollverein, spiritual unity in a gospel, *Kultur*, and a leader in Prussia. Germany was now convinced that she had obtained control of all minds in Europe. She had long considered it certain that all ideas emanated from her in science, in poetry, in art, in philosophy. To prove this intellectual hegemony only force was needed. Sadowa established the supremacy of German civilisation. Prussia had profited by the lower moral tone in Europe and, unable to establish herself in justice and right, had undertaken a war, first abhorred, later applauded when it had met with success. *Teutomania*, *Kultur*, should henceforth rule the world. Sadowa ushered in the Germanic era.

"The arms employed by Prussia were audacity, temerity, defiance." To this gross trinity only one other element is lacking to launch Germany upon a reckless career of insatiable ambition. That other is falsehood. The decisive moment will have come when despotism feels the need of disguising itself, of changing its name and language—of assuming the mask of liberty. When despotism masquerades as democracy, will a complacent democracy then espouse despotism for the sake of its support? If such an union ever take place, bid adieu for ever to what you have known of

German life: integrity of mind, greatness of spirit, genius, glory. Everything will disappear drowned in the confusion of good and ill, of justice and injustice, of the true and the false. Could anyone in 1914 have given a keener analysis of the soul of Germany and of the cause of her moral decline? Would that Europe had listened to his warning of fifty or even seventy-five years earlier.

More difficult to calculate is what will happen when this swollen Teutonic pride, giving itself free rein, imagines that it sees from the height of its fresh victories the latin nations at its feet. "I fear the effects of infatuation on this huge body. When it stretches from the Baltic to the Danube, what thoughts and ambitions will awake within the giant? So mighty and so fresh! What a temptation to measure its strength against the world!"

Again, Quinet becomes the victim of profound depression. Europe, in watching the wanton aggression of the Blond Beast, has been guilty of moral cowardice. More painful to him than anything else was the conduct of his native land. France had denied her eternal mission in the world as the torch-bearer of civilisation and had, by her pusillanimity, invited Prussia to snatch the fiery cross from her hand. This is what Prussia did. In a purely hypocritical attitude that had become natural to them, Bismarck and the Prussian king declared themselves to be the heirs of the French Revolution and the restorers of the liberties of Europe. This was that lie which is for Germany the mark of complete depravity. Masquerading in the cloak of Liberty she has returned to mediæval conceptions and set the world back three centuries. What Spain did in the sixteenth century, France in the seventeenth, Germany is doing in the nineteenth. Carried away by the conception of mass, Germany is not concerned whether or not this mass is hardened against justice and liberty. Its only thought is force, its only desire is to be the strongest. "Prussia is repeating to-day only what has been heard so often in the past: Be strong. Carry out your fancies. Crush everything before you without discussion." "As for those little states that may have survived by some chance or other, their only hope of continued existence is to efface themselves, to have only one thought, self-effacement. Their best guarantee is to remain indifferent to all those large interests of right and virtue that rend the world."

So Quinet in 1867 added another chapter, *Après Sadowa*, to those begun in 1830 and showed that his earliest predictions had been partially fulfilled already, expressing the hope that his con-

victions of worse things to come would prove false. "This is what I have been permitted to see in the consequences of things that have first taken place. May the near future belie me in all that is not a happy presentiment for the justice and liberty of France and the world." But his voice was that of one crying in the wilderness. Politicians live only in the passions of the crowd and in the purloins of selfish interests. How can a prophet stand in their midst and live? Quinet had been in exile for almost fifty years, when Sedan supplemented Sadowa and poured its humiliation upon France. He died in 1875. Combinations of policies, alternations of humiliations and hopeful successes, placatings of the Blond Beast postponed the evil day for a generation. 1914 saw all his predictions fulfilled to the letter.

J. S. WILL.

J. S. WILL.

15

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